

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TRADITIONAL

AFRICAN LEADERSHIP PRACTICE:

A STUDY OF TWO KINGDOMS

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Summary:- This paper seeks to demonstrate that some elements of what is now called transformational leadership can be found in the philosophy and leadership practices of some of the peoples of Africa. Part of the answer to our understanding of traditional leadership practices is provided in the African philosophy of *ubuntu* (Zulu), or *botho* (Sotho), or *unhu* (Shona). Using the Mutapa Empire of Zimbabwe and the Kingdom of Lesotho, the author argues that Africa has its own home grown leadership and governance traditions which, if modernized, could provide sustainable indigenous leadership models for the continent. An analysis of the lessons today's leaders can learn from these kingdoms is presented in the closing sections of the paper.

Transformational Leadership and African Tradition

Leadership is a new discipline that began to emerge in the twentieth century as a field of study that is related to but distinct from Management. While the discipline is new, leadership as a practice can be said to be as old as human civilization. Wherever we see ancient monuments, great civilizations and true social and economic progress, there has been effective leadership. In Africa the great pyramids of Ancient Egypt, the stone monuments of Great Zimbabwe, and the emergence of the Zulu, Sotho, Swazi, Ndebele and other nations are all evidence that there has been strong leadership practice on the continent.

Transformational leadership is a style of leadership that has been identified by leadership theorists as a particularly effective form of leadership. As a concept it forms a substitute of the new discipline of Leadership along with such other concepts as the leadership of domination, responsible leadership and servant leadership. As a practice and briefly put, transformational leadership is a style of leadership in terms of which the leader articulates a powerful and inspiring vision, makes himself / herself a role model and challenges followers to think deeply about how they can perform their duties better and improve the performance of the organisation.

It was Burns (1978) who first made the distinction between *transactional leadership* (the style of ordinary leaders) and *transforming leadership* (associated with extraordinary leaders). Bernard Bass (1985) subsequently used the term "transformational" in place of "transforming" giving currency to the now commonly used distinction between "transformational leaders" and "transactional leaders". The former are exemplified by the normal employer /employee relationship where the employer simply exchanges rewards (usually financial) for the worker's labour without challenging the employees to reflect about how to perform their duties better and serve the organization better. The transformational leader, as understood by modern theorists,

engages, challenges and inspires the followers or associates. While there is not one uniform definition of the concept, most specialists in the field would agree that transformational leadership is characterized by four features (or what have been called the Four Is):

- Idealized influence: The leader has a character and a vision that attract others to follow him or her.
- Inspirational motivation: The leader has the capacity and disposition to motivate others to follow the vision.
- Intellectual stimulation: The leader challenges the normal beliefs and attitudes of the group or team and encourages innovation and creativity.
- Individualized consideration: The leader pays attention to individual members of the team or organization and helps them to achieve both their personal goals and the goals of the organization.

Clearly, this style of leadership is different from the leadership of domination where followers follow and obey the leader not out of conviction, but out of fear (Boehme 1989). Transformational leadership is in most respects akin to servant leadership which was popularized by the twentieth century thinker and businessman, Robert Greenleaf (Greenleaf 1977). The true servant leader is a role model for whom service comes first and leadership second; who has the capacity to inspire others; and who recognizes human potential and aims to bring out the best in people, and to do this not by using force, but through influence.

In discussing transformational leadership it is important to highlight two words that some writers on the subject do not give sufficient attention to: *vision* and *change*. To transform is to bring about complete change. A transformational leader is one who brings about change - positive change - to the organization, country or entity concerned. Referring to the eleven leaders he analyses in *Leading Minds* (1995), Howard Gardner has characterized them as "persons who by word and/or personal example, markedly influenced the behaviors, thoughts, and/or feelings of a significant number of their fellow human beings..." And he adds, "The leaders' voices affected their worlds, and, ultimately, our world". For a leader to be able to do this he or she must have a vision. As John Van Maurik (2001:76) has pointed out, "... without a vision and the sense of meaning and purpose it engenders, nations, business and even people perish".

The question that arises is whether we can identify examples of transformational leadership in African societies. It is necessary to state from the outset, in this regard, that the author of this paper is considerably handicapped as he is not a historian, but only a leadership theorist and leadership development practitioner. It can be argued that a leadership theorist who is also a specialist in African history would be in a much stronger position to provide evidence of transformational leadership among, say, the Nguni, Shona, Sotho or Venda people of Southern Africa. Be that as it may, I submit that with some knowledge of traditional philosophy, governance structures and leadership practices, it is possible to identify elements of what we now call transformational leadership in some traditional African societies. I would further argue that Africa has its own home grown leadership and governance traditions which, if carefully analysed and modernized, could provide sustainable leadership models for the continent.

Part of the answer to the question whether we can identify examples of transformational leadership in traditional African societies is provided in the traditional African philosophy of *ubuntu* (Zulu) or *botho* (Sotho) or *unhu* (Shona). In these and other languages the philosophy says "A person is a person on account of other people (or because of other people)". Applied to the province of leadership, the philosophy is best exemplified by the Southern Sotho maxim:

Morena ke morena ka batho "A king is a king on account of the people". Clearly this is a philosophy that emphasises the principle of interdependence in human interaction: " I am because you are. You are because we are." No human being is self-sufficient. We all become fully human in relation to one another.

For a leader who understands and believes in this philosophy, there is no king without the people. In other words kingship or leadership cannot be exercised in an ivory tower. The king depends on the people just as much as the people depend on the king. By accepting the principle of interdependence, the leader or king realizes that leadership involves interaction with the people. It entails consultation with and listening to the people or the people's representatives. The actual interaction with the people may be direct (in terms of, say, face to face interaction) or indirect (through the people's representatives or by means of policies or actions that have a positive impact on the people). By interacting with the people, the leader is given a platform on which to engage, challenge and inspire the people. The extent to which these principles are applied in the actual exercise of power will naturally depend on the character, disposition and abilities of each individual leader.

It is the burden of this paper to adduce evidence from two traditional African kingdoms with a view to demonstrating that by applying the principle of the ubuntu philosophy in combination with strategic leadership and diplomacy, the leaders of these kingdoms were able to exert a positive impact on their subjects and to transform their territories into important and internationally recognised nation states. The two kingdoms are the Mutapa Empire of Zimbabwe and the Kingdom of Lesotho during the reign of the founder of the nation, Moshoeshe I. King Moshoeshe is discussed as an example of one visionary leader, whereas Mutapa was a dynasty that lasted in different forms for about five hundred years (from about 1400 to 1902).

Sources of Information

The information on transformational leadership is taken from books and from internet research (see References). Of particular interest in this study are the works of Burns (1978), Bass (1990) and Hay (2013). Gardner ((1995) , van Maurik (2001) and Greenleaf (1977) are also important works of reference. Gardner provides an in depth analysis of leadership and gives examples of leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Pope John XXIII, Eleanor Roosevelt and Mahatma Gandhi who practised transformational and servant leadership without necessarily using these concepts to guide them. As already explained, Greenleaf popularized the concept of servant leadership, while van Maurik's book is very valuable as an account of authors who have written on various approaches to leadership, including transformational leadership.

.Most of the information for this paper is taken from two unpublished papers by this author (Ngara 2009 and 2012). The first paper was read at a conference in Durban, while the second was prepared for a conference which the author was eventually unable to attend. The material for the second paper was based on information gathered from different sources. Of particular importance in that regard are the works of Mudenge (1988), LaNdwandwe (2009), and some historians such as Beach. An important source for that paper and the earlier paper (Ngara 2009) was Mrs Teboho Ngara whose knowledge of Sotho oral traditions proved to be very valuable. Another important source was internet research. The *New World Encyclopaedia* and Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, were particularly useful in the course of the investigation.

METHOD

From the section immediately preceding it should be clear that much of this paper depended to a very large extent on reading and analysing books, articles and the author's unpublished papers. In reading books such as Mudenge (1998) and LaNdwandwe (2009) the author of this paper had to select material that is relevant to transformational leadership. In this regard the author's second paper mentioned above deals in some detail with the governance structure of traditional Swazi society and the leadership style of King Sobhuza II. While the material on Swaziland is very relevant to a discussion of responsible leadership, one is not convinced about its relevance to transformational leadership, hence it does not form an important part of the subject of this paper.

Mrs Teboho Ngara was born and brought up in Thaba Bosiu, the area from which King Moshoeshoe I ruled Lesotho. If the people of Lesotho pride themselves in their oral traditions, the Bafokeng of Thaba Bosiu seem to be particularly well versed in the exploits of the renowned leader. This author is therefore privileged to be living with someone he has been able to interview about the leadership style of King Moshoeshoe, and whose knowledge of Sotho oral traditions proved to be very illuminating in the interview and discussions. The fact that she is also a leadership specialist with a passion for teaching the subject came in handy in the course of the discussions.

In the sections that follow, the author discusses the Mutapa Kingdom first, followed by an analysis of the leadership style and achievements of King Moshoeshoe, before drawing lessons from the combined wisdom of the two kingdoms. The paper concludes with a discussion on the implications for the modern African state of the lessons learned from the two traditional societies.

DISCUSSION

The Mutapa Empire and Transformational Leadership

As already indicated, this essay seeks to analyse the Mutapa Empire (or Mutapa Kingdom) as a dynasty without focussing on a specific King. It is appropriate to open the discussion with a quotation that seems to be a very pertinent comment on the significance of the Empire:

The Mutapa empire may not have been the equal of contemporary European empires in technology but its craftsmen produced high quality artefacts while trade was carefully regulated with set measures and standards to ensure fairness. Knowledge of this empire, built up through commerce more so than conquest, can help to construct a balanced story of where, when and how human societies have flourished. (New World Encyclopaedia 2012:1).

The founders of the Mutapa Empire were of the Shona group and were both culturally and politically connected to the builders of the Great Zimbabwe. Historians have reconstructed a history of the Mutapa dynasty from the founder, Nyatsimba Mutota (c.1430 - c.1480) to the last King, Chioko Dambamupute (1887 - 1902). Thus the empire lasted in different forms for more than five hundred years. Most of the information on the empire is from written Portuguese records on which historians like Mudenge (1988), David Beach and others have relied. Looking at the Mutapa state from the perspective of transformational leadership, it is possible to identify

at least four themes that we can explore in respect of the lessons that today's African leaders can learn from this empire and its dynasty. The four themes are:

- Relations between the King and provincial leaders
- The role of the economy in developing a stable state
- The King's involvement in the affairs of the people, and
- Relations with foreign countries.

Relations between the Mutapa and provincial leaders

Writing about the scope of command that determines the degree to which the King's authority extends to influence the actions of subjects, Basil Sansom (1974) contrasts what he sees as the absolutism of Nguni Kings like Shaka and the immunities enjoyed by Sotho vassals, which immunities limited the powers of the monarch. With regard to the theme of this paper, it can be argued that King Shaka depended heavily on his military power and did not sufficiently recognise the principle of interdependence between the King and his vassals. We can also infer from this that the King's absolutism could only result in dissension with various groups fleeing from what they might have deemed to be the King's iron fist. We can further infer that the King's tight control of provincial matters was likely to result in the disintegration of his empire as a result of the vassals' discontent, whereas the Sotho vassals might have been more tolerant of the powers of their kings because of the immunities they enjoyed.

On this issue, the Mutapas seem to have developed an interesting approach - they seem to have realized the benefits of giving relative freedom to the citizens and to regional governors, which strategy seems to have earned them the loyalty of both vassals and ordinary citizens. The New World Encyclopaedia notes: "The Mutapa did not intervene needlessly in the lives of his subjects. He appears to have realized that if the people enjoyed a reasonable standard and a stable society, their loyalty could be expected" (p.3). And whereas the regional governors were expected to pay taxes to the King by way of cattle and other forms of wealth, this was not a one way process. What often happened was that "Gifts were given by the king to officials and regional governors to ensure their loyalty". There was give and take with the King recognising the importance of the ubuntu principle of interdependence. This is what Chanaiwa refers to as the "charisma, well-being and political wisdom of the Mutapa" (New World Encyclopaedia, p.3). This can be characterized as a soft way to engage and influence followers, gaining their loyalty, not through brute force, but by inspiring them. By showing trust and mutual respect, the King was able to endear himself to the provincial leaders and the general populace.

Creating a stable state by managing the economy

The wisdom of the Mutapas appears to have extended to the management of the economy. The Mutapa Empire enjoyed a thriving economy for centuries (Mudenge 1988:161ff). The economy was diversified with agricultural farming and cattle as its backbone. Millet, rice and vegetables were grown. Large numbers of cattle were kept, and there was also poultry farming. Because of the system of paying tribute to the King, the Mutapa could store large quantities of grain and feed his people with this surplus in times of famine. Another important industry was gold mining. There were evidently reasonable reserves of gold, and this led Europeans to associate the Mutapa Empire with King Solomon's gold from Ophir which is mentioned in the Book of Kings (1 Kings 10:11). In addition, elephant hunting was also a thriving business. As a result of such a rich and relatively diversified economy, a strong trade industry developed between the Mutapa emperors, the Portuguese and Far Eastern countries like India and China. Obviously a thriving economy facilitated the development of a stable society while peace and stability facilitated the growth of a stable economy that would have led the subjects to be reasonably contented and loyal. What is important to note here is that by paying attention

to the economy and not just to their power and control of the state, the Mutapas were able to transform their kingdom into a relatively stable and thriving empire. This would seem to lend weight to the suggestion implied in the quotation from the New World Encyclopaedia above that the economy more so than conquest has the potential to facilitate the development of a stable and flourishing society.

Involvement in the affairs of the people

A matter to which historians do not seem to attach the importance it deserves is the fact that the Mutapa was personally involved in solving people's problems brought to him. According to some sources, the Mutapa's people had seven holidays per month. On these days the King did not himself take a holiday, but was very busy holding audiences to solve the problems brought before him. Mudenge (1988:88) quotes Bocarro and Barros as saying, "These audiences often last from morning till evening, without the King ever sitting down...". The audiences had to be held by the King himself, and if something prevented him from doing so, the responsibility would fall upon his most senior minister called the Nengomasha. What this seems to show is that the Mutapa did not live in an ivory tower. He was interested in the affairs of his people and was personally involved in interacting with them and listening to their problems. Thus the maxim "The King is a king on account of the people" was put into practice. This was also a good example of servant leadership as the King saw himself as having the responsibility of serving his people. Clearly, not every member of the dynasty would have performed the duties to the same level as the best of them, but the principle was there, and it appears that some Mutapas were able to elicit admiration and loyalty from the people.

Relations with foreign powers

I have not done sufficient research on this topic, but it is clear that the Mutapa dealt with foreign powers. Perhaps the most important of these during the five hundred years of the existence of the dynasty was Portugal which was a powerful nation at the time. Portugal managed to colonize Mozambique and would have wanted to extend its rule into the Mutapa Empire. However, for the duration of five hundred years Portugal did not conquer Mutapa and was content with signing a treaty in terms of which the European nation kept a small army at the headquarters of the Mutapa. This arrangement suited both sides: For the Portuguese the intention was ostensibly to protect the Mutapa, but in reality the Portuguese would have wanted to be kept informed about what was going on at the Mutapa headquarters. On the other hand, the Mutapa was able to contain Portuguese ambitions and used the arrangement to keep other possible enemies at bay. It was a marriage of convenience that demonstrates the Mutapa's use of diplomacy to keep the enemy at bay.

King Moshoeshoe I and Transformational Leadership

A brief historical account

Moshoeshoe, the son of Mokhachane of the Bakoena BaMokoteli clan, was born in Leribe, Lesotho, in about 1786 and was given the name Lepoqo. At age 34 he formed his own clan consisting of the Bakoena BaMokoteli and some members of his mother's clan, the Bafokeng. (Wikipedia 2012:1). He settled in Butha-Buthe in Northern Lesotho. The Lifaqane wars of the 19th century forced Moshoeshoe to move and settle in Thaba Bosiu. (Wikipedia 2012: 1). By the second part of the 19th century Moshoeshoe had established the Basotho nation and found himself fighting against the Boers and the British. He proved to be a great warrior as well as a diplomat in dealing with both groups. In 1865 he lost a large portion of what is now Free State to the Boers. The wars ended in 1867 when Moshoeshoe and the British

agreed to make Lesotho (then called Basutoland) a British Protectorate. Moshoeshe died on 11 March 1870.

Moshoeshe as a leader who protects and provides for his people

One of the first things that strike one about Moshoeshe is that he is said to have been very good as a leader who protected and provided for his people. That he protected his people against external aggressors is evident from the way he fought against the Boers and the British and finally decided to seek British Protectorate status. Moshoeshe's care for his people went beyond protection against external aggressors. When there was famine in the region during the Lifaqane wars, Moshoeshe is reported to have seen to it that food was provided for his people. It was because Moshoeshe's people were provided for that Rakotswane and his group of cannibals (*malimo*) who had killed and eaten the King's grandfather, Peete, found themselves going to Thaba Bosiu in search of food.

The story goes that when Moshoeshe's *matona* (ministers / councillors) recognized Rakotswane, they urged the King to kill these cannibals. Instead of welcoming the idea of killing his grandfather's killers, Moshoeshe persuaded his *matona* to prepare a feast for the cannibals arguing that they had to be respected because they were his grandfather's grave. Because of this generosity and spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, the cannibals were fed, integrated into the community and ceased behaving as cannibals.

Relations with matona

An important aspect of Moshoeshe's leadership style was his policy of consulting his *matona*. When negotiating with an enemy or adversary, he would sit on the same side as the enemy team facing his own team which would be on the other side. He would position himself in such a way that his team would see from his gestures whether he wanted them to agree with the enemy or not. In that way consultation with his councillors and elders would take place even during the process of serious negotiations with the enemy. This collective leadership style strengthened trust and loyalty between the King and the people's representatives.

It would appear that the collective decision strategy was such a key feature of the King's governance culture that as a consequence two popular maxims developed as part of the daily discourse of the Basotho. The one maxim says *Morena ha a ete* "The King doesn't go away", meaning that even during his absence his message is communicated through his *matona* and the elders. The other maxim says *Lentswe la Morena le haeloa lesaka* "The word of the King (or the voice of the King) must have a kraal built round it". Whatever the King says must be protected. What this means is that you don't expose the King. You have the responsibility of advising the King so that he does not say something wrong. If he says something that is not appropriate, you have to find a way of protecting him. It also suggests that the leader must not shoot from the hip. He should learn to be accountable by consulting his team.

Moshoeshe's pervasive influence in the promotion of peace

A characteristic feature for which Moshoeshe is known is that he was a man of peace. It was because he was a lover of peace that instead of massacring his grandfather's killers, he chose the route of forgiveness, reconciliation and generosity. This gesture had such an impact on the cannibals that they stopped eating humans. In his interaction with the British, the Boers and Christian missionaries, he chose the way of peace whenever this was possible and in the interests of his people. His wisdom as a man of peace was buttressed by skilful diplomacy. It was a mark of his wisdom that he was prepared to engage a White man, Eugene Casalis, as

his advisor in matters of foreign relations, and was also able to welcome both Protestant and Catholic missionaries to his Kingdom (Wikipedia 2012).

Moshoeshoe's love for peace was so pervasive that peace became entrenched as part of the culture and discourse of the people of Lesotho. Thus you have greetings like *Ha e ate!* "Let it be multiplied!" and *Ha e phaphatoe!* "Let it be given a pat on the back!" or "May it be upheld!" What is being multiplied or patted on the back or upheld is not mentioned by name, but every speaker of the language knows that this is a reference to *khotso* "peace". In fact *khotso* quickly became an alternative greeting to *Lumela* "Hello". The opposite of peace is war. When the people of Lesotho say *Ha e lale!* "Let it sleep!" without mentioning the subject, they are referring to war. The full expression is *Ntoa ha e lale!* "Let war lie down and go to sleep!" *Khotso* is valued so much that it is part of the national slogan of Lesotho: *Khotso, Pula, Nala!* "Peace, Rain, Prosperity!" What this means is that if there is peace and enough rain, the people will surely have a bumper crop. If you begin by promoting peace, and pray for rain, your people will have a good harvest and be well fed!

It is reasonable to argue that Moshoeshoe's concern for peace was so pervasive that the concept of peace became a key element in the psyche of a traditional Mosotho. Where in Western and other societies only bravery and military prowess are hailed, the traditional Mosotho child was socialized to regard peace as something of greater value than gallantry and violence. This is exemplified by the following saying:

Habo Lekoala ha ho lluo. Habo Mohale ho phehoa ka mamina. "At the home of the coward there are no tears. At the home of the gallant warrior people cook with mucus." Whereas there is peace and quiet at the home of the coward, at the home of the gallant hero there is so much weeping and lamentation that mucus gets mixed with food as the crying women cook.

Lessons from the Combined Wisdom of the Two Kingdoms

This section presents a synthesis of what can be learned from the combined wisdom of these two African kingdoms. There is a lot that can be learned, but the intention here is to present in summary form the positives that today's leaders can benefit from.

1. The benefits of the philosophy of Ubuntu

The philosophy of ubuntu presents one of the most powerful explanations of the power relations that should exist between the leader and the led, between political leaders and the populace. What this means is that in these traditional societies what we call transformational leadership went hand in hand with responsible leadership. In other words, our ancestors in Southern Africa bequeathed to us the idea that leaders are accountable to the community, to the people they lead. The leader exists for the purpose of promoting the interests of the people. The leader must therefore regard himself /herself as a steward who owes the position he /she holds to the people or the nation and must consequently be accountable to the people. In this regard the governance structure of the nation should ideally contain checks and balances such that while the King or President is the supreme leader, he / she can be disciplined if he/she abuses the power invested in him or her.

2. Managing the economy and people's needs

Whatever political ideology the ruling authorities embrace, and whatever power relations exist between the ruler and the ruled, a prime consideration is that the general population must feel that their needs are catered for: that they have shelter and clothing; that an environment is created in which they can work the land, feed themselves adequately and sell their produce;

that they have access to education and health care facilities and so on. Here we can learn useful lessons from how the Mutapas developed the economy of the Empire and how Moshoeshe attracted people to his Kingdom by providing food for and feeding his people. When their material needs are taken care of, the people are likely to go about minding their own business and not be overly concerned about who occupies the corridors of power. Rather than envy those who walk the corridors of power, the people are more likely to be loyal because they are satisfied that their needs are catered for, and may feel that their expectation of genuine representation by the rulers has been met. Goran Therborn (1980: 93 ff) posits that this sense of representation when the rulers are seen to be ruling on behalf of the people may produce a sense of *deference* - conceiving the present rulers to be specially suited, whether by reason of descent or because they have made an important contribution. In the case of Moshoeshe, there was definitely a sense of deference because, not only had he founded the nation of Lesotho, but he had also courageously defended the nation and seen to it that the people were provided for.

3. Maintenance of peace and stability

Success in farming can only occur under conditions of peace and stability. A major threat to pre-colonial states is the possibility of attacks from hostile kings or chiefs. From the discussion in earlier sections of this paper, it becomes clear that the leaders of the two kingdoms analysed here worked for peace. Granted that one cannot be certain that every Mutapa was a man of peace, what is clear is that the Mutapas managed for a long time to create a relatively peaceful environment for their people by skilfully managing relations with the Portuguese and hostile African tribes. It was because there was relative peace that agriculture, gold mining, hunting and trade could flourish in the Empire. It is also clear that while a great warrior, Moshoeshe was a man of peace who went to the extent of seeking British protectorate status for Lesotho in order to protect the peace and stability of the nation. It could be asked what does this have to do with transformational leadership? From the points made in this and the immediately preceding paragraph, it can be argued that there is an indirect form of transformational leadership in terms of which the leader elicits a sense of loyalty and patriotism from the people by catering for needs such as peace and good economic conditions.

4. Relations between the King and provincial leaders

The extent to which the central government has control over provincial matters is a key issue, more so in large states than in small ones. In a kingdom or empire like the Mutapa state, this boils down to the power of the King / Queen over provincial governors. In a modern democracy, the equivalent is the relationship between the State President and Premiers or Provincial Governors, as the case may be. The question that arises is the extent to which the central government should have control on provincial matters. As already explained, here we learn useful lessons from the Mutapa Empire where the King gave relative autonomy to provincial governors. It would appear that provincial governors became more loyal when they saw that the leader at centre recognized their authority and went to the extent of showing appreciation by sending gifts to these leaders. This created an environment in which there was mutual respect between central authority and provincial leaders. This is a pragmatic form of transformational leadership which was based on soft management of relationships which resulted in the King positively influencing the hearts and minds of his provincial leaders.

5. The power to serve and inspire

The best index for testing the extent to which the leader is accepted by the masses and seen to genuinely represent their interests is the degree to which ordinary people show confidence in as well as affection, admiration and reverence for the leader. When, by reason of his /her

competence, character and humanity, the leader inspires the general populace and is revered by ordinary men and women, then that leader has become a truly great leader who influences the people to follow him / her voluntarily.

We can infer that to some extent the best of the Mutapas were able to induce admiration and respect in the hearts and minds of ordinary subjects when they held day long audiences about seven times every month trying to solve the problems brought before them. This is a situation where the Mutapa appears to have practised the ideology of what Robert Greenleaf (1977) has called the servant first type of leader rather than the leader first type, the difference being that the servant first type of leader is motivated, not by the ambition to lead, but by the desire to serve, whereas for the leader first type, service may be incidental to the ambition for power or wealth. The practice of the Mutapa in this regard was also a practical demonstration of the leader placing himself at the service of the people in the true spirit of *ubuntu* / *unhu* based leadership.

By far the clearest example of inspirational leadership that this paper has dealt with is that of Moshoeshoe I of Lesotho who developed a genuine collective leadership style and became a great inspiration to his subjects. As already noted, he was such an inspirational leader that his influence had a lasting effect on the psyche, culture and day to day discourse of the ordinary Mosotho. Nearly 150 years after his death, you still hear the people of Lesotho using peace as a greeting word or as a parting slogan: *Khotso Ntate!* "Greetings, Elder!", *Ha e ate!* "May it be multiplied!" or *Ha e phaphatoe!* "Let it be given a pat on the back!"

Martin Kalungu-Banda (2006:46 ff) cites a case when Nelson Mandela said, "The problem I have is *not* how to use power. My biggest problem is how *not* to use power." An important lesson that today's leaders can learn from King Moshoeshoe I of Lesotho is that it is much more powerful to lead by inspiration than to get people to do what you want them to do by means of brute force. Moshoeshoe built his nation by providing for and inspiring his people, and he continues to inspire the people of Lesotho today. I believe it is partly for this reason that the date of his death, the 11th of March, is celebrated annually as a public holiday.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, I wish to submit that among the challenges for which African governments of our time need to find viable solutions are the following: the possibility of foreign intervention as in the case of Colonel Gaddafi's Libya; internal conflict and dissension which may threaten the peace and stability of a nation; and the imperative to develop viable and thriving economies. I would go further to argue that these three are interrelated, and that in the case of all three today's leaders can learn useful lessons from the two kingdoms discussed in the paper. First, international relations depend to a great extent on balancing national interests against foreign interests and finding a suitable balance. It is reasonable to assume that the Mutapas of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not really want to have a standing relationship with the Portuguese, but they had to reckon with the interests of the Portuguese and possible threats from other powers and ethnic groups, and so they agreed to a pact in terms of which the Portuguese kept a garrison at the palace, ostensibly to protect the Mutapa. Whatever the motives of the Portuguese, the Mutapas went into a marriage of convenience which made Portugal an ally of the Kingdom of Mutapa in the face of possible threats from elsewhere. Similarly, Moshoeshoe was able to guarantee the survival of the state of Lesotho by seeking British protection and keeping a European advisor.

The Mutapa did not only make friends with the Portuguese. In his wisdom he made sure he developed a sense of loyalty among the vassals in charge of provinces, and at the same time got involved in finding solutions to the personal problems of his subjects. As already explained, we can infer that the best of the Mutapas were able to induce admiration and respect from the hearts and minds of ordinary subjects when they held these day long audiences. Now this speaks to three of the four features of transformational leadership identified at the beginning of this paper, namely:

- Idealized influence
- Inspirational motivation, and
- Individualized consideration.

Similarly, Moshoeshe earned the loyalty of his *matona* and the general populace. A good example of his ability to influence and inspire is that he challenged the *matona* to think out of the box when he prevented them from killing the cannibals who had eaten his grandfather. It could be argued that Moshoeshe's leadership style did not only show the three features of transformational leadership just referred to, but that he was also capable of inducing intellectual stimulation in that he challenged the normal beliefs and attitudes of the *matonas* when he made them realize that victory is not only won by vanquishing the enemy, but can also be achieved by accommodating and incorporating the foe. So loved and popular was Moshoeshe that by the latter part of the 19th century he had earned himself the title *Morena e Moholo / Morena oa Basotho* 'The Great King/King of the Basotho' (Wikipedia10/07/2012).

The lesson modern African leaders can learn from these great rulers in this regard is that they must develop the art of making friends both with friendly foreign nations and with their own people. With foreign nations the challenge is to forge strategic partnerships that help to strengthen the security of the state without mortgaging the nation to foreign powers. As far as the domestic front is concerned, the challenge for politicians is to endear themselves to the general populace, to engage them with a view to inspiring them and inducing loyalty and patriotism even among members of the opposition. By being generous and avoiding vindictiveness, Moshoeshe was able to turn the killers of his grandfather into loyal and decent subjects. Such loyalty to a modern head of state and government might limit the chances of successful uprisings of the kind that took place in Libya and other Arab ruled states in North Africa. It is arguable that if Colonel Gaddafi had endeared himself to ALL the citizens of Libya NATO might not have found it so easy to oust him. It is reasonable to argue that the people of Libya as a whole, not just his home village, would have stood by him and prevented him from being betrayed.

The expression "a hungry man is an angry man" is not just an empty slogan. As explained earlier, the Mutapas were able to develop a stable empire partly because they had a thriving economy and the citizens were apparently able to feed themselves, while in the case of Moshoeshe the King himself made it his responsibility to see to it that his subjects were fed. As also noted earlier the Mutapas managed to develop a thriving economy because they managed to create a relatively stable and peaceful state. One lesson that today's leaders can learn from this is that a thriving economy, peace, and a happy and loyal population are all factors that contribute significantly to the creation of a stable state and consequently to the security of those in power.

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